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Borough of Ludlow.



ANNUAL REPORT
of the
Medical Officer of Health
for the Year
1947.

Public Health Officers.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

JAMES L. GREGORY, M.B., CH.B., F.R.F.P.S., D.P.H.
D.T.M. AND HY.

SANITARY INSPECTOR:

H. V. JAMES, M.I.M. AND CY. ENG.,
CERT. ROYAL SAN. INST.

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BOROUGH OF LUDLOW.

Annual Report of the Medical
Officer of Health, 1947.

1st July, 1948.

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the Health of the Borough for the year ending 31st December, 1947. It has been drawn up in accordance with the Ministry's Circular 170/47, dated 31st December, 1947.

The population of the Borough is estimated to be 6,123, which is 41 more than in the previous year. The birth-rate was 20·3 and the death-rate 18·3 per 1,000 of the population. The infantile mortality rate was 36 per 1,000 live births.

The incidence of Infectious Diseases was again very low and for the fifth year in succession no case of Diphtheria was notified. The immunisation of children against Diphtheria was continued as in former years.

Eight new cases of Tuberculosis were notified during the year and of these seven were Pulmonary cases and one Non-pulmonary. Two deaths from this disease were registered and this gives a death-rate of 0·32 per 1,000 of the population, which is a very low rate.

During the year four new Council Houses were completed and two houses were built by private enterprise, and it is expected that considerable progress will be made as regards housing in 1948. Many of the older houses in the town are in a very bad condition, but so far it has not been possible to do much in the way of repairing these or of re-conditioning as all labour and material is required for the building of new houses.

The Council have had under consideration the question of improving the pressure in the water mains at certain points where it has been low, and plans have been made for a new duplicate main to be laid through the town which will improve the pressure in the districts concerned.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES L. GREGORY,
Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW.

STATISTICS, 1947.

LIVE BIRTHS—

			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	125	63	62
Illegitimate	...	...	14	8	6
Totals			139	71	68

BIRTH-RATE per 1,000 of the estimated population = 20·3.

STILL BIRTHS—

			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	4	2	2
Illegitimate	...	...	1	1	0
Totals			5	3	2

STILL BIRTH-RATE per 1,000 (live and still) births = 34.

DEATHS—			Total	M.	F.
...	...	...	112	42	70

DEATH-RATE per 1,000 of the estimated population = 18·3.

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES—

		Number of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total Births
(a) From Puerperal Sepsis	...	Nil	—
(b) From other Puerperal causes	...	Nil	—
Totals		Nil	—

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR—

			Number of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 Live Births
(a) Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate births	...	...	4	32
(b) Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate births	...	...	1	71
(c) All Infants per 1,000 total live births	...	...	5	36

DEATHS from—

Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	20
Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	0
Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	0
Diarrhoea (under two years of age)	...	...	...	0
Tuberculosis (all ages)	...	...	...	2

Section A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Area (in acres)	1,068
Estimated Population (mid-1947)	6,123
Number of Inhabited Houses as at 31st Dec., 1947 ...	1,590
Rateable Value of district	£33,555
Product of 1d. Rate	£127

POPULATION.

The estimated population of 6,123 shows an increase of forty-one as compared with the previous year. The natural increase of population was fifteen. This was the same as in 1946.

BIRTHS.

There were 139 births, of which number 14 were illegitimate or 10%, which is a higher percentage than usual. The birth-rate was 20·3 as compared with a rate of 20·5 for the country as a whole.

STILL BIRTHS.

These numbered five in all and this gives a rate of 34 per 1,000 total (live and still) births, which is lower than last year (65). The rate per 1,000 of the population is 0·82.

DEATHS.

One-hundred-and-twelve deaths were registered, which number is higher than usual, and gives a death-rate of 18·3 per 1,000 of the population. The causes of death will be found in the table at the end of the report.

The death-rate cannot be compared with that of other districts as no account is taken of the age and sex distribution of the population, which factors influence the death-rate.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

Five infants died under the age of one year and the infantile mortality rate is 36 per 1,000 live births.

Two of the deaths were from Prematurity, two from Broncho-pneumonia and the fifth from Congenital Deformity. The ages at death were 11 hours, 6 days, 3 weeks, 1 month and 6 months.

The total number of still births and infant deaths was 10 as compared with 15 in 1946. This gives a rate of 70 per 1,000 total (live and still) births.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

No maternal death was registered and since 1942 there has only been one such death in the Borough—in 1946.

Section B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

STAFF.

There are no changes to record.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Full use has again been made of the Laboratory at the Royal Salop Infirmary, which is now under the control of the Medical Research Council acting for the Ministry of Health.

Reports were received during the year on water and milk samples and also on pathological specimens sent in by Private Practitioners. The Laboratory is well equipped and the Staff work in close co-operation with the Borough's Health Officers. My thanks are due to Dr. C. A. Jones and Dr. G. Grant for their help during the year under review.

NURSING SERVICES IN THE HOME.

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, Part III, the County Council will become responsible for this service and in their proposals it is stated that a separate Home Nursing Service is contemplated for Ludlow. The County Council have also outlined their proposals for Health Visiting, School Nursing and Midwifery Services to cover the whole county.

During the year a Home Help Service was commenced and very useful work has been done in providing domestic help to households in need of it in the Borough. In the report for the first quarter of the year 1948, it is mentioned that four full-time home helps and one part-time home help are employed. Since 27th October, 1947, thirty-two cases have been booked. There are five voluntary workers who take turns in attending at the office at Dinham, where applications for helps are received. The service is organised by the W.V.S. for the County Council, the

County Oganiser being Mrs. I. K. Wilson of Shrewsbury. As this service become better known in the town and the surrounding districts it is certain to become a very important section of the social services. The shortage of domestic workers makes matters very difficult indeed for families where the mother is laid aside by illness, or in other cases where old persons are living alone and become ill.

AMBULANCE SERVICES.

There was no change to report as regards Ambulance Services for the inhabitants of the Borough during the year. As in former years the St. John Ambulance and British Red Cross Joint Committee had two ambulances available at Ludlow.

In addition to these, the County Council have ambulances at Cross Houses, near Shrewsbury, and cases of Infectious Disease can be removed to Monkmoor Hospital by an ambulance sent from Shrewsbury. In these latter cases the Medical Officer of Health or the Sanitary Inspector should first of all be notified so that arrangements may be made with the hospital authorities for the reception of the cases.

As mentioned in last year's report, the County Council will take over the Ambulance Services for the County under Part III of the National Health Services Act, 1946, on the 5th of July, 1948. In the proposed scheme three ambulances will be kept at Ludlow, and in any special emergency one of the eight ambulances to be kept at the central depôt in Shrewsbury will also be available. In the meantime, the St. John Ambulance and B.R.C.S. have agreed to continue to have their ambulances available until such time as the new County Council scheme can be brought into being.

The following are the stations of the present ambulances :-

<i>Ambulance</i>	<i>Station</i>	<i>'Phone No.</i>
St. John & B.R.C.S.	Gravel Hill Garage, Ludlow.	Ludlow 184.
County Council	Cross Houses	Cross Houses 242
Infectious Diseases	Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury 2510

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS.

There is no change to record as regards the School Clinic, Infant Welfare Centre and Ante-natal Centre, all of which are carried on by the Salop County Council Health Department. I am indebted to Dr. Taylor for the following figures showing the attendances in 1947.

ATTENDANCES—1947.

Aged 0-1 years.		Aged 1-5 years		Expectant Mothers.	
1st visits.	Total attend.	1st visits.	Total attend.	1st visits.	Total attend.
159	1,314	75	858	28	89

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.

Particulars of the Hospitals available have been given in my previous reports and there is no change to record. Hospitals will be taken over by the Hospital Boards as from the 5th July, 1948.

Section C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

This section of the report deals with Water Supplies, Sewerage and Sewage Disposal, Drainage, Refuse Collection and other matters concerned with environmental hygiene.

WATER SUPPLY.

The sources of the Town's supplies are as follows :-

- (a) Burway Springs, which lie to the north of the town to the left of the main road going towards Bromfield. The water from this source gravitates to a pumping station at Mill Street and is pumped from there to the low level reservoir at Whitcliffe by a water turbine with a capacity of 7,000 gallons per hour. There is a 25-h.p. Tangye Diesel Engine as a stand-by. The reservoir has a capacity of 240,000 gallons and serves about 1,026 houses with an estimated daily amount of 160,000 gallons of water.
- (b) Fountain Springs Supply, which gravitates to the high level reservoir in Whitcliffe Woods, the reservoir having a capacity of 60,000 gallons and serving 550 houses with an estimated daily consumption of 60,000 gallons.
- (c) Elan Aqueduct (Birmingham Corporation Main). Water from this source is used as required to supplement the first two supplies. A 4in. main connects this supply with the other supplies.

TREATMENT OF WATER.

All water is chlorinated before passing to supply and the Surveyor reports that of eighteen samples submitted for bacteriological examination during the year all were of satisfactory quality.

Of a total of 1,590 houses in the area it will be seen that all but a few are connected to the mains (91% to houses and 9% from stand-pipes).

Approximately 11,000,000 gallons were taken from the Elan Aqueduct Supply during the year.

During the year extensions were laid to the Dodmore Lane Housing Estate, and it is planned to lay 1,850 yards of duplicate mains (4in. and 5in.) through the town from the high level reservoir to East Hamlet so as to improve the pressure in that area and to make provision for the new houses to be built there. Some complaints were received during the year of lack of pressure in the mains in the Henley Road area and it is expected that the additional main will improve matters there.

SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The disposal works are to the south of the town and consist of sedimentation tanks, three percolating filters and irrigation area. The detritus tank and collecting sump are at the pumping station at Temeside, which was damaged in 1947 by the severe floods of the River Teme.

A sample of the sewage effluent was taken in July and was found to conform to the standards laid down by the Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal.

No extensions to the sewers were undertaken during the year.

There are only 33 houses not connected to the sewers out of a total of 1,590.

The main sewers were treated for rats during the year but no serious infestation was found.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

A weekly collection is made from private houses and the collection is three times a week from business premises, such as cafés, hotels, etc. A two-ton Morris collecting vehicle is in use and a new "Karrier" Bantam Vehicle has been ordered with a capacity of five cubic yards.

Disposal is by tipping at Fishmore and the rats are kept down by the County Council Staff. A tip dressing is applied to keep insects in check.

SALVAGE.

Salvage is collected twice monthly and whenever possible individual collections are made when the amounts to be collected

are large enough to justify this. The following are the figures for the year :-

Material	Amount.	Value.
Paper ...	48 tons.	£310
Bones ...	4 tons.	£16
Scrap Iron ...	7 tons.	£8
Totals	59 tons.	£334

Section D.

HOUSING.

Number of Inhabited Houses ...	1,590
Number of Houses owned by the Council ...	179
Number of Council-owned Flats ...	32
New Houses completed in 1947—	
(a) Council conversions ...	16
(b) New Council Houses ...	4
(c) Built by private enterprise ...	2
Number of applications for houses ...	537

BUILDING PROGRAMME—1948.

To be completed (Permanent type) ...	52
To be completed (Airey type) ...	56
Private enterprise building in progress ...	2
Further scheme at Sandpits (Permanent) ...	28

Of the 56 permanent type houses at Dodmore Lane only four were occupied by the end of the year. The 56 Airey houses were commenced early in November, 1947. The building of six houses at Temeside has been deferred in the meantime pending the approval of the Ministry of Health.

UNFIT HOUSES.

The Council have had eight houses in Old Street made the subject of a Clearance Area, and the Ministry of Health made an Order confirming this. Two of the houses were occupied and the two families have been he-housed.

There must be many more houses in the town which require either re-conditioning or demolition, but details of the survey made are not yet to hand, so exact numbers in each class are not available. During the present acute shortage of houses it is not possible to deal with the older houses as rapidly as would seem necessary, but once all the poorer houses are classified it will be possible to have a better idea of the whole problem.

HOUSING INSPECTIONS.

Mr. James reports that 280 inspections have been made and 69 notices served under the Housing Acts, of which 68 have been complied with.

OVERCROWDING.

There are numbers of very bad cases and these are specially considered when new houses are allocated. In the houses owned by the Council there are 11% overcrowded, but details are not yet available for all the houses.

Section E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MEAT.

There are no slaughter houses in the town where animals are slaughtered for human food, and the Ministry of Food's abattoir at Craven Arms remains the centre for slaughtering in the area of South Shropshire. Inspection of all meat is carried out by the Inspectors of the Ludlow R.D.C. Some assistance was given in this work also during the year by the Borough Inspector. Inspections of all meat shops in the town are carried out at regular intervals.

At the present time it is not possible for the Ministry of Food to erect new and adequate abattoirs to serve large areas, but this plan is being kept in mind so that when building is possible this may be accomplished. The one chief advantage of such large centres would be the fact that all meat could be examined instead of only a proportion of it as was formerly the case when there were many small slaughter houses.

The Inspector reports that all food which is reported to him as being unfit is examined within 24 hours of notice being received. The following is a list of the food condemned during the year:-

Fish	...	66 tins and 22 stone.
Vegetables	...	152 tins and 1 cwt.
Tinned Meat	...	32 tins and 94 lbs.
Home-killed Meat		5 cwts.
Tinned Fruit	...	31 tins.
Milk	...	279 tins.
Jam	...	52 tins
Cheese	...	8½ lbs.
Dried Fruit	...	55 lbs.
Sugar	...	56 lbs.
Cereals	...	15 packets.
Sauce	...	12 bottles.

ICE CREAM.

The Ice Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations, 1947, came into force on 1st May, 1947. The chief point in these regulations were mentioned in last year's report (page 9).

The Inspector reports that there are six retailers of Ice Cream in the town and that three of these retail proprietary brands of Ice Cream, while the other three buy a mixture from some of the large manufacturers and simply freeze it on their own premises before selling it.

The result of the Regulations will be to restrict the number of firms who make their own Ice Cream mixture, as most of the smaller firms will buy the mixture from the large manufacturers who have the necessary equipment for heat treatment installed on their premises.

Of two samples taken in August, 1947, one was Grade II and the other Grade III. Both firms have been visited and it is to be hoped that future samples will show an improvement.

The test applied to Ice Cream for grading purposes is the Methylene Blue Test.

MILK.

The supervision of Milk production at the farm is still a matter for the Local Authority, although it is expected that it will shortly be taken over by the Ministry of Agriculture whenever the necessary staff can be appointed for this work.

As long ago as July, 1943, a White Paper was presented to Parliament in which the future policy of the Government with regard to the safeguarding of the Milk supply was outlined. It was then indicated that it was intended to schedule areas in which the Ministry of Food would have power to make it an offence to sell Milk which did not fall into one of the following categories, viz. :-

1. Heat Treated Milk as defined by Order.
2. Tuberculin Tested Milk.
3. Accredited Milk sold by a retailer who sells the milk of a single Accredited Herd.

It will not be possible to carry out the above plan until there is adequate plant to carry out the Heat Treatment of Milk in any area to be so scheduled, and so far no area has been scheduled.

In the Ludlow Borough there are thirteen producers and thirty-four visits of inspection were paid during the year to their premises. At least two samples were taken from each farm and

in cases where the samples fell below the Accredited Milk Test (Methylene Blue) further samples were taken. Our object must be to secure that all Milk sold in the Borough must come up to the accredited standard which, after all, simply means that the Milk is reasonably clean and suitable for human consumption.

The following are the particulars of Producers in the Town:-

Total Producers on register	...	...	13
Milk Shops	...	...	2
Sellers of T.T. Milk	...	...	1
Sellers of Accredited Milk	...	...	2
Inspections of Premises	...	...	34

Section F.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year the low incidence of Infectious Diseases has been continued with the exception of an epidemic of Measles, which took place among the young children in December and in which eighty-two cases were notified. There were no fatal cases.

NOTIFICATIONS—1947.

Disease.	Cases notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Scarlet Fever ...	1	0	0
Whooping Cough ...	8	0	0
Measles ...	82	0	0
Erysipelas ...	1	1	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum...	1	1	0

It will be noticed that no case of Diphtheria has been notified for another year and there has now been no case since 1942, in which year there were six cases.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The immunisation of children continued as before during the year, most of the work being done at the Schools and the Infant Welfare Centre. A total of 132 children were immunised, of whom 108 were under five years and 24 were of school age.

In addition to these children, a further 92 children received a reinforcing injection on going to school for the first time.

It is estimated that 60% of the children under five and 92% of the school children are now protected against Diphtheria and the result has been that no child in Ludlow has had Diphtheria during the last five years. In spite of such results throughout the country generally, there is still some propaganda being directed against immunising children against Diphtheria. However, in view of the results already obtained in this and other countries, it is doubtful whether such propaganda will have much effect on the parents of young children.

As mentioned in last year's report, the vaccination and immunisation services will be transferred to the County Council as from 5th July, 1948. Vaccination against Small Pox ceases to be compulsory, but efforts will be made to get as many children vaccinated as well as immunised.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.

Cases of Infectious Disease will continue to be sent to the Isolation Hospital at Monkmoor which will pass to the Hospital Board as and from the 5th July, 1948.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of cases on the register as at 31st December, 1947, was as follows :-

MALES.		FEMALES.		Total.
Pulmon.	Non-pulmon.	Pulmon.	Non-pulmon.	
19	12	13	7	51

The above figures show an increase of three male Pulmonary cases and one male Non-Pulmonary case over the figures at the end of 1946.

NEW CASES.

Eight new cases were notified, of which seven were Pulmonary (four male and three female), and one was Non-pulmonary (male). This is the same number of new cases as in 1946.

DEATHS.

The number of deaths registered was two, both of which were from the Pulmonary type of disease, and were of females.

DEATH-RATES.

The death-rates were as follows :-

D.R. per 1,000 (Pulmonary T.B.)	=	0.326
„ „ (Non-pulmonary T.B.)	=	0.000
Total (all forms)	=	<u>0.326</u>

The death-rate in 1947 was lower than usual and lower than that for the country as a whole, but taken over the last five years (1943-1947) the death-rate has been 0·724 per 1,000 of the population, which is slightly above that for the whole country.

TREATMENT.

The County Council are responsible for treatment schemes, including Dispensaries, Sanatoria, etc., but under the Health Services Act the Sanatoria will pass under the control of the Hospital Board.

PREVENTION.

Local Authorities can assist in the prevention of Tuberculosis chiefly by trying to secure satisfactory housing conditions for families where there is a notified infectious case. It cannot be stressed too often or too strongly that the chief source of danger in the spread of the disease is the presence in a house of an "open" case of the Pulmonary form of the disease. From such a case a whole family can be infected.

TUBERCULOSIS.

In the past fifty years or more, although the cause of Tubercular Disease has been well known, by far the greatest amount of work and money has been spent in trying to cure cases rather than to prevent new cases. Why this should be the case is difficult to explain except that most doctors are not trained so much in preventive work as in the cure of diseases.

Prevention is not so spectacular as some cures may be and does not attract so much attention, but if Tuberculosis is to be eradicated in this country or reduced to a very small number of cases it is surely through preventive measures that this will be attained rather than by curative means. The great decrease in cases of Diphtheria in this country, and many other countries, has been the result not of isolating cases in hospital or of any medical or surgical treatment but of the application of the means of prevention by way of inoculation.

Some of the delay in applying methods of prevention through inoculation in the case of Tuberculosis may have been due to the failure of Koch's Tuberculin to justify the hopes which were held for it. It has now been decided to try the use of B.C.G. (Bacille Calmette-Guerin) in this country as it has been used for many years in France for inoculating children with a view to prevention of Tuberculosis. At a meeting of the National Association for

the Prevention of Tuberculosis held in London nearly thirty years ago, an eminent doctor described his work in France with B.C.G, so that this country cannot be accused of undue haste in experimenting with B.C.G.

In spite of the known infectivity of the disease for so many years the great majority of people do not even yet realise how infectious it is, and it is difficult to persuade them of the need for precautions in the home. More propaganda should be undertaken in this matter as without it the population will continue to remain ignorant.

As regards housing, the difficulty is that when the wage-earner is the victim to the disease there is less money for rent and food, and the whole family tends to fall into poverty and this results in bad housing and insufficient food, both of which make matters worse than ever. Much of the decline in Tuberculosis has no doubt been due to the better feeding of all classes, as in this way resistance is built up.

The granting of allowances of late years to families where the wage-earner is in a Sanatorium may have helped some families, but the scheme is too limited in its scope as only certain cases are eligible for the allowances. A much wider application of this scheme is needed if any adequate results are to be seen.

To sum up in regard to means of prevention the following are among the important points:-

- (a) Education of the public as to the Infectious nature of Tuberculosis.
- (b) Adequate and suitable Food for contacts.
- (c) Suitable Housing Accommodation and Reduced Rents where needed for families in which there is a case of Tuberculosis.
- (d) A Milk supply which is free from Tubercle Bacilli.

CANCER.

The total number of deaths from Cancer was 20, which is the highest number for some years and gives a death-rate of 3.266 per 1,000 of the population. In previous years the deaths have numbered 10, 14, 12, 13 (1943-1946).

It will be seen from the table of causes of deaths that Cancer stands second as a cause of death in the Borough and, while this may be in part due to the greater number of persons living to

the ages at which Cancer is commoner, it is to be hoped that the amount of research which is being carried out in this and other countries will increase our knowledge of the causation of this disease and then lead to some means of prevention being found.

We must not forget the possibility of the disease being infectious to some degree although, as yet, no definite proof of this has been found. The history of many families would suggest that infection cannot be ruled out and, for this reason, care in the nursing of Cancer patients should always be exercised until we have more definite knowledge.

CAUSES OF DEATH—1947.

Cause				Number of Deaths.	
I.	Heart Disease	...	...	...	57
II.	Cancer	...	...	...	20
III.	Intra-cranial Vascular Diseases			...	9
IV.	Other Diseases of Circulatory System				5
V.	Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	...	...	...	2
VI.	Influenza	...	...	...	2
VII.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	2
VIII.	All other causes	...	...	...	15
				Total	112



